

LAET Case Management Review Project
Survey for Programs
By Colleen M. Cotter and Julia Gordon

Legal Aid of East Tennessee, Inc. (LAET) has retained us to conduct a national review of case management systems. This review is made possible by a Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) from the Legal Services Corporation. The results of this review will be published nationally to help programs determine which case management system will best suit their needs and to illustrate ways in which case management systems can help programs achieve their program goals and mission.

We will be including the following widely used case management systems in this review (along with a couple of other smaller systems): CASS; the Kemp's Caseworks systems; Legal Files; Pika; Practice Manager; ProLaw; the PS Technologies (Network Ninja) systems; and TIME. An important part of this review is gathering information about how programs use their case management systems to accomplish their goals. If you use one of these systems we would appreciate you taking the time to answer these questions about the system you are using and return the completed survey to us by September 15, 2003.

To complete this survey, simply type the answers into this survey, save the new document, and send it via email to Cotter and Gordon. Please distribute the questionnaire to other staff members in your programs who use the CMS and ask them to answer those questions that are relevant to their positions. We may follow up with some of you for a more in-depth survey.

If you have any questions about this survey or the project please contact Colleen Cotter (812/322-5592, cmcotter@earthlink.net) or Julia Gordon (202/669-0424, julia@juliagordon.net).

Overall CMS information:

What case management system (CMS) do you use?

When did your program purchase its CMS?

When did the system become fully operational in your organization?

How many cases are in your CMS?

What type of IT support do you have for your program overall (include all FT/PT employees, volunteers, and contractors/consultants)?

Name, organization, position, and contact information for person completing this survey:

Please rate the CMS on a scale of 0 - 5
(0 = system does not have function; 1 = poor; and 5 = excellent)
Please consider both ease of use and comprehensiveness of each function.

System administration:	
How easy was it to install and set up?	
How smooth was the conversion of old data?	
If applicable, how easy are upgrades?	
How easily can non-IT staff customize pull-down menus, canned text, and other features?	
How responsive is the developer to meeting your needs for additional customization?	
How well does the system handle multiple simultaneous users?	
How easy is it to assign different levels of access to different users?	
How well can you access the system from different office locations?	
How well can you access the system remotely through a web browser?	
Cost, Training and Support:	
How would you rate the value compared to the cost?	
How effective was the vendor-provided training for your staff?	
How easily can you access the system's technical support infrastructure when you need it, ie, when your own IT staff cannot handle the problem?	
How useful are user groups or web-based support systems such as FAQs and question indices?	
Eligibility and Intake	
How easy is it to use the eligibility and intake screens?	
How effectively do the eligibility and intake screens gather all the information you need for your program intake process?	
How well does the system automate initial eligibility determinations based on income, assets, citizenship status, age, geography, etc?	
How extensive is the conflicts check, ie., in addition to searching clients and previously identified adverse parties, does the system also flag prior contacts such as witnesses and other parties?	
How effective is the system in preventing mistakes or omissions in data entry?	
Case/Matter/Activity Referral, Tracking, Assignment, and Supervision	
How well does the system facilitate referral of cases/matters to other agencies and providers?	
How well does the system facilitate referral of cases/matters to pro bono attorneys?	
How well does the system facilitate management of cases/matters referred to pro bono attorneys?	
How well does the system facilitate assignment of cases/matters to particular offices, staff members, and units?	
How effectively does the system reassign cases/matters if the initial casehandler leaves or otherwise cannot continue?	
How well does the system track either simultaneous or consecutive involvement of multiple staff members and volunteers in a particular case/matter/activity?	

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How effectively can you track information you need for funding or supervision, such as funding source, disposition, outcome, type of eligibility, immigrant status, community legal education events, referrals?	
How effectively can supervisors use the system to track and oversee the work of supervisees, including timekeeping?	
If you have a hotline, how well does the system work for that purpose?	
How effectively does the system create and maintain files for non-client-specific work (matters and activities)?	
How well does the search function work?	
Calendar/Tickler Systems:	
How useful do you find the system's calendar and tickler systems?	
How useful do you find the system's daily overview?	
How easily can you sort appointments/tickler items by staff person, office, and unit?	
Timekeeping:	
How useful are the system's timekeeping features?	
How well can you keep time when you are interrupted during a task?	
Contact Management/Casenotes:	
How effectively does the system keep track of all contacts related to a case, matter or activity, including date and substantive content of contact?	
How comprehensive is the system's contact management (address book) function (i.e. does it include both organization-wide and personal contacts and track involvement of persons in various cases/matters/activities)?	
How sufficient is the space and formatting for case notes?	
Document Management:	
How effective is the system's document management function (i.e. are all the documents related to a case/matter/activity permanently linked in one easily accessible place, including emails, contacts, scanned documents or other documents that you did not create yourself, and other information)?	
How effectively can you search the full text of all documents associated with a case/matter/activity?	
Document Assembly:	
How useful is the system's document assembly feature, including templates for letters, pleadings, and other documents?	
How effectively can you customize the preformatted documents and create new form documents?	
Checklists/Expert Systems:	
How effectively can you create and use customized questions or instructions for intake that pop up when a problem code or other data is entered?	
How effectively can you create and use checklists for attorneys and paralegals that automatically generate activities, form pleadings, tools, and due dates for cases/matters/activities?	

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How effective are the system's tools for support of pro bono attorneys?	
How effective are the system's other litigation support tools?	
Report Writing:	
How useful are the pre-loaded reports you need (such as CSR and MSR information, case disclosure, etc.)?	
How easy is it to create all custom reports you need based on all the different types of data that you collect through the course of a case/matter?	
How useful are the system's tools for creating graphs, maps, and other visuals to help you communicate data more effectively?	
How easily can you create and send reports upon the occurrence of the designated event or at a designated time?	
Funding and Resource Development:	
How effectively does the system track grants, donations, and donors?	
How well does the system integrate accounting and grant information with timekeeping information and case/matter/activity data?	
Interface with Other Software:	
How well does the system interface with other software programs, such as email, word processing, report writing, and mapping programs?	
How effectively can you download the system information to a PDA?	
Overall:	
How adequate is the system's speed?	
How easy is the system to use?	
How effectively does the system help you coordinate with other organizations in the state justice community?	
If your organization was re-evaluating whether to keep your CMS, how strongly would you advocate for keeping it (0 = pitch it; 5 = if we got rid of it, I couldn't do my job)	

For the following questions, please write as much as you would like.

What functions or features of your CMS help you do higher quality work and pursue your organization's mission?

What functions or features of your CMS hinder you from doing higher quality work and pursuing your organization's mission?

What additional functions or features would be useful to you, either now or in the future as your work evolves?

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this survey.
We really appreciate your help.